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## On the Index of Forbidden Books

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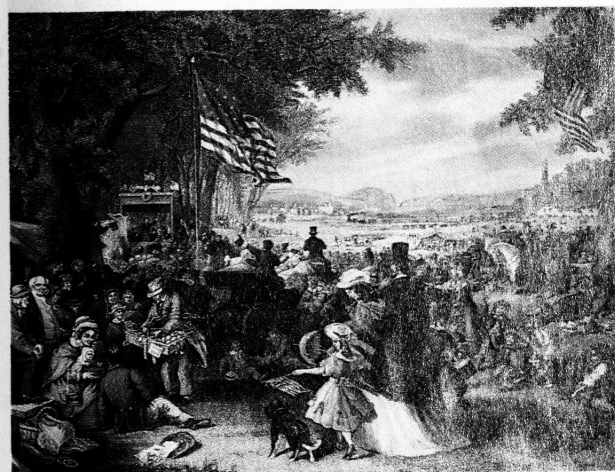
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July 4 has been celebrated as the nation's birthday.

The founders of the new nation considered Independence Day an important occasion for rejoicing. John Adams said, "I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward for evermore." Independence Day was first observed in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776. The Declaration was read, bells were rung, bands played, and the people rejoiced. Independence Day has been celebrated throughout the country since then. In



Detail of an engraving by John C. McRae from a drawing (about 1875) by Frederic A. Chapman (Granger Collection)

**Independence Day** is an American national holiday that honors the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Americans traditionally celebrate the holiday with family outings that conclude with colorful displays of fireworks.

1941, Congress declared July 4 a federal legal holiday.

In early days, Independence Days were occasions for shows, games, sports, military music, and fireworks. Fireworks and the firing of guns and cannon caused hundreds of deaths each year. Since the early 1900's, many cities and states have passed laws forbidding the sale of fireworks. Some cities permit fireworks, but hire trained people to explode them.

Today, Independence Day is a major midsummer festival in the United States. Many communities celebrate it with programs and pageants, games and plays, athletic contests, and picnics. Jack Santino

**Independence Hall**, or Old State House, is the most famous building in Philadelphia, and the scene of some of the most important events in American history. Patriots met in the Hall in May 1775, in the Second Continental Congress. There they chose George Washington as commander in chief of the Continental Army. On July 4, 1776, John Hancock signed the Declaration of Independence in the Hall, and the Liberty Bell proclaimed the news from the Hall's tower on July 8. The bell, displayed in the Hall for many years, now hangs in a building just north of the Hall. Congress Hall and other historic buildings are also nearby. See also **Liberty Bell**; **Pennsylvania** (picture). Theodore Hershberg

**Index** is an alphabetical list of topics and subjects that appears at the end of many books. It refers to all the important ideas or names mentioned in a book and lists the pages where they can be found. The *table of contents* lists chapter headings and appears at the beginning of a book.

The most common kind of index lists—in alphabetical order—the topics and the page or pages on which they appear:

Adam, 195  
Diamond, 502  
Emerald, 409  
Gem, 111, 213, 409

An *analytical index* groups many individual subtopics under major subject headings. For example, the following list shows that the book contains information on gems in general and on specific gems, such as diamonds and emeralds:

Adam, 195  
Gem, 111, 213, 409  
Diamond, 502  
Emerald, 409

Many indexes, such as those to magazines or newspapers, fill large volumes. They list articles by author, title, and subject. Some libraries have *card indexes*, or *card catalogs*, that list all their books, also by author, title, and subject. Many encyclopedias have indexes large enough to fill whole volumes.

*World Book* uses two indexing systems. In Volumes 1 through 21, cross-references direct the reader to information (see **Cross-reference**). For example, a reader who looks up **Air brake** finds a cross-reference to **Brake**. In addition, a comprehensive index in Volume 22, the Research Guide/Index, provides access to specialized information of a detailed nature. It refers to volume and page numbers and to the title and subtitle of the article. A reader who looks up *air brake* in the index finds such entries as:

Brake (Air brakes) **B:571**  
Railroad (Passenger and freight cars) **R:107**  
Westinghouse, George **W:244**

Sara Garnes

**Index of Forbidden Books**, commonly called the Index, was a list of books the Roman Catholic Church once forbade its members to read without special permission. The church considered the books harmful to faith or morals.

The church abolished the Index in 1966, and no longer publishes lists of forbidden book titles. Occasionally, the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* issues statements about recent books it does not recommend for Roman Catholics. The church abolished the Index to give Catholics freedom to decide which books will endanger their faith and morals.

Pope Paul IV drew up the church's first official list of prohibited books in 1559. He forbade Catholics to read any titles he named. The *Congregation of the Index* was organized in 1571 to supervise the Index. The *Congregation of the Holy Office* (now the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*) took over the function in 1917. Before being abolished, the Index was revised more than 40 times.

John Patrick Donnelly

**Indexation**. See **Cost of living**; **Inflation** (Effects on income).